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## FISKE FUND PRIZE DISSERTATIONS OF THE RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY.

NO. V.—BY JACOB FULLER, M.D., PROVIDENCE.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

At a meeting of the Fiske Fund Trustees, held at Providence, R. I., on the 30th of June, 1838, it was decided that the Dissertation bearing the motto, "*Per viam salutis carere, multos habere medicabilem morbum.*"—*Amstrange*—and which, on breaking the seal of the accompanying letter, was found to be written by Jacob Fuller, M.D., of Providence, was entitled to the premium of fifty dollars offered for the best Dissertation on the question, *What are the causes, nature and best mode of treatment of Scarlatina Anginosa?* In awarding the premium to this Dissertation, neither the Trustees nor the Rhode Island Medical Society hold themselves responsible for its doctrines or the treatment recommended.

Signed,

USHER PARSONS,  
NILES MANCHESTER,  
ERIKEL FOWLER.

### "What are the Causes, Nature and best mode of Treatment of SCARLATINA ANGINOSA?"

SCARLATINA is a term derived from "*Scarlatto*, the Italian for a deep red," and though barbarous with respect to the Latin language, has been so long in use by most writers of the modern systems of nosology, that it cannot well be displaced by the more classical term *Rosalia*, which Dr. J. M. Good has made an effort to restore. The name of this disease, like many others, is derived from one of its symptoms.

The term *scarlatina* is employed to distinguish a disease attended with fever, sore throat, and an eruption on the surface, which appears on or between the second and fifth day of the disease (reckoning from the commencement of the indisposition), first on the face, neck and chest, and progressively spreading over the whole body, terminating with a desquamation of the cuticle between the fifth and ninth day of the disease.

The surface of the body, when covered with the rash, has often the appearance of being dusted with red pepper; at other times the eruption appears in red patches, from the size of a finger-nail to that of a silver dollar; but more often these patches coalesce, forming a bright red surface over the whole body, very much resembling the shell of a boiled lobster, and frequently the eruption is attended with minute vesicles.

Scarlatina has been divided into three species, including, among the number, the cynanche maligna of Dr. Cullen, or scarlatina sine eruptione; but we object entirely to this division, inasmuch as it is not founded in nature, nor on pathological considerations. We know of no distinct varieties of this disease, except those produced by the attending fever. When the simple inflammatory fever accompanies the eruption, it corresponds exactly with the distinct smallpox; but when the attending fever is either an inflammatory or a congestive typhus, the symptoms are the same as in the confluent smallpox. The two kinds of measles, called the common and the black, should also be distinguished by the accompanying fever, and the same may be said of all eruptive diseases. Hence in scarlatina, and other eruptive as well as common fevers, there are two grand varieties, which may be distinguished by the names of *synocha* and *congestive typhus*. Between these two there are many shades and subdivisions, or different combinations; but the two extremes are a mild *synocha* and a congestive typhus, or the typhus gravior of the old writers. The pure congestive form of scarlatina is very rare; but it is common to see a combination of inflammatory with congestive symptoms. When the disease is attended with the congestive typhus, the rash is imperfectly thrown out, and soon assumes a raspberry or a dark purple color, like the measles, accompanied with the same fever, and like them is apt to recede entirely. Sometimes this fever is accompanied with petechiae, bleeding from the gums, liver, bowels and other organs.

During the continuance of an epidemic scarlatina, we have repeatedly observed, in the different members of the same family, every form of the disease, from the mildest to the most severe. This observation will also apply to both forms of smallpox, some of the members of the same family having the distinct, whilst others have the confluent, though all may have received the contagion at the same time. The different forms of the disease in different individuals, are to be sought for in their different constitutions; but independent of a constitutional predisposition to either *synocha* or typhous fever, there is a particular constitution of the atmosphere which predisposes to either one or the other of these fevers, for all practitioners have observed the scarlatina to be more malignant in some years than others. Furthermore, whenever eruptive fevers become epidemic, they are usually accompanied with the same kind of fever, which prevails throughout a large tract of country at the same time, whether *synocha* or typhus. Also, whenever the inhabitants of malarious districts are attacked with scarlet fever, it commonly assumes the remittent or the intermittent form of the miasmatic fever of that location. These facts were long ago observed by Dr. Sydenham, and have been too much neglected by modern writers on the subject of febrile diseases.

If the above views of the exanthemata be correct, the eruption in all of them is of no manner of consequence in the treatment, further than as an index to point out the particular kind of the accompanying fever. For if the fever be judiciously treated, the eruption will take care of itself—or, in other words, if the attending fever be either *synocha*, ty-

plus or congestive typhus, let the practitioner treat it accordingly, as he will not then be led astray by names, more especially if he takes into consideration the type of the other prevailing fevers of the same season.

The humoral pathologists believe the fever to result from a fermentation and concoction of the humors, by which the offensive matter is thrown to the surface of the body, producing the eruption. That the fluids of the human body become contaminated with the peccant matter during the progress of eruptive diseases, we are assured by the child becoming affected with smallpox in utero, and also by some of the eruptive diseases having been communicated by inoculation with the blood of the diseased. Still, however, the eruption should be regarded as a mere symptom of this class of diseases.

With respect to the primary seat of irritation from the poison of scarlatina, we think, with M. Broussais, that the first link in the chain of morbid action commences in the mucous membrane of the alimentary canal, producing a gastro-enterite; and the stomach being the centre of the morbid irritation, the diseased action is extended by sympathy to the brain, liver, pancreas and lungs, which eventually causes cold chills, followed by fever.

When, in the congestive form of scarlet fever, nature makes an effort to remove the diseased action from an internal vital part to the surface of the body, a part less essential to life, she seems to falter, and the reaction, accompanied with eruption, either does not at all, or imperfectly take place.

"After a long and patient investigation," says Dr. Mackintosh, "comparing the symptoms found on dissection, I have come to the opinion that the mucous membranes are the seat of the disease, the nature of which is inflammation more or less acute and extensive, and that the part most generally implicated is the mucous membrane of the lungs, particularly in measles and smallpox, whilst that of the stomach and bowels is the part chiefly, if not principally, affected in urticaria, roseola, roseolia and miliary fever. The eruption is merely to be regarded as a symptom.

"It is well known that many cases of eruptive fever are very mild, and require little treatment, whilst others are extremely severe and fatal; and that a great deal depends upon the eruption, whether it comes out at the usual period, and whether it remains out, or prematurely or suddenly recedes. The eruption, in point of fact, ought to be regarded as a natural blister, acting as a counter-irritant. It is produced by powers inherent in the constitution, which enable it to remove so much of the diseased action from an internal organ, the functions of which are more immediately necessary to life. In slight cases, I conceive the eruption is in proportion to, if it do not exceed, the amount of the internal disease. There can be no doubt that the eruptions are produced by inflammation of the cutis, which consequently must take off so much of the determination of the blood, and so much of the diseased action from the internal organs."—*Vol. I, p. 163, Practices of Physic.*

In all eruptive disorders attended with fever, some of the most impor-

tant organs become deranged and fail to perform their healthy functions, and the whole system is oppressed and labors hard under the constitutional commotion excited by the disease. For some days previous to the eruption, and often during this stage, respiration labors as at the commencement of bronchitis; the brain is also often affected, and delirium, lethargy, or coma, accompanied with convulsions, especially in children, often follow. Hence the eruption is tardy in its appearance, or is imperfectly thrown out. But when the rash appears early in the disease, and is of a bright red color, a decided amelioration of the symptoms follows, and the patient is no longer subject to convulsions; although the irritation and inflammation on the surface of the body be so great that the fever is still kept up, and does not abate until the eruption begins to fade, and desquamation to commence.

All physicians acknowledge the danger which exists, when the eruption is deficient, or when it prematurely recedes, which is usually the case in all eruptive diseases attended with congestive fever. But from whence is the danger? Not, we opine, from the afflux of blood again to the original seat of the disease in the mucous membranes of the primæ viæ, but to some important internal viscus, such as the liver, spleen, lungs and brain, causing congestions, and a *masked inflammation* (if we may be allowed the term), which cannot develop itself—the crowded state of the vessels of the organ implicated, preventing reaction—a state of the system which is sure to be followed by death, unless the circulation can be equalized, and the superficial bloodvessels receive their proper share of the vital fluid.

"The inflammation of the skin is the great characteristic of the disease," though in some particular seasons it appears without any accompanying rash, when it is called *cynanche maligna*, or *scarlatina sine eruptione*. The affection of the throat is generally present, but in some rare forms it is wanting, when the disease is called *scarlatina sine angina*. This is the mildest form of the complaint, and scarcely requires medication; but the *scarlatina sine eruptione* is one of the most severe forms of the disease, and under the common name of putrid sore throat is known and dreaded throughout the United States as one of the most fatal diseases.

Scarlatina, of every kind, is generally accompanied by a remarkable prostration of strength, both physical and mental, sometimes to such a degree as to occasion death in a few hours, or in a few days. Post-mortem dissections prove the lesions in this disease to be those produced by inflammation of the brain and its membranes, also inflammation and congestions of the liver, lungs, spleen and mucous membranes of the stomach and bowels; sometimes the mucous membrane becomes ulcerated.

The above pathological observations are deemed necessary in order to direct our attention to a judicious treatment of scarlatina, as well as all other eruptive fevers; for the general appearance of the whole family is so much alike, that if the attending fever is not mistaken, success will generally follow the employment of the same kind of remedies in either of them.

Most writers on the subject agree that the scarlet fever arises from a

specific contagion, which lies dormant in the system from three to ten or twelve days. The contagion spreads more freely, and the disease is more fatal, among the poor than the opulent—and it attacks infants and persons under twenty years of age much more frequently than persons above that age. The individual, when once attacked, generates a poison of the same kind, which becomes diffused in the atmosphere, and spreads the contagion to other persons. The propagation by fomites is acknowledged by all, and children recovering from scarlatina sometimes communicate the disease to other children, for two or three weeks after the fever has subsided.

The scarlatina, like the smallpox and measles, usually attacks the same person but once during life, though there are many exceptions to this general rule; yet the same individual is often subject to repeated attacks of the angina sine eruptione, accompanied with fever.

Scarlatina often prevails as an epidemic throughout an extensive range of country, and it appears to us that there is a peculiar state of the atmosphere which favors the diffusion of the contagion, and which ceases to act whenever this predisposition in the air has passed away. There is likewise some peculiar state or modification of the atmosphere, which causes this and other fevers to be more malignant in some years than others. Different constitutions, and different states of the system in the individuals of the same family, may, however, cause the disease to appear in its mildest and in its severest forms.

Its contagious character is most conspicuous among the poor, who live in crowded, unventilated apartments, where they are obliged to occupy the same rooms with the sick, when the contagion becomes so concentrated, that rarely a single individual of the family, young or old, escapes the disease, though the young are the first to suffer.

Among the opulent who occupy spacious apartments, and confine the sick to different rooms from the rest of the family, and where proper attention is paid to ventilation and cleanliness, the disease does not always spread to other members of the family; and it is much less contagious than either smallpox or measles, which almost every person is liable to take, when exposed to the contagion—whilst many persons resist the contagion of the scarlatina, though often exposed to its full influence.

Whenever the contagion is diffused through the atmosphere, a protracted exposure to cold during the continuance of the epidemic will as certainly produce the disease as exposure to the contagion in a sick room. The houses of the poor, when not cleaned, retain the contagion for a long time. To this cause are to be attributed the occasional occurrence of the disease after the epidemic has passed away.

*Diagnosis.*—The only diseases for which scarlatina is liable to be mistaken, are the measles and the smallpox. From the measles it is distinguished by the color of the efflorescence and by the ulcerations of the throat, though it is sometimes difficult to distinguish them when the measles is attended with swelled tonsils and a sore throat, as is sometimes the case. But in the measles the eruption appears at a later period, and has more the purple appearance of the raspberry than the

scarlet eruption; also the catarrhal symptoms, such as hoarseness, sneezing, cough and watery eyes, the constant attendant of the measles, are wanting in the scarlatina. In the smallpox an efflorescence sometimes occurs, which is mistaken for the scarlet eruption; however, a few days will decide its nature. But, after all, it is not very important to discriminate the three diseases from each other, inasmuch as the treatment is the same in all, a judicious management of the attending fever being all that is required for the safety of the patient.

*Prognosis.*—In scarlatina the prognosis will depend upon the accompanying fever. In the mildest form, *sine anginâ*, the disease is scarcely sufficient to confine the patient to the house, and rarely requires much medication. But when either a highly inflammatory fever or a congestive typhus attends the disease, the prognosis should always be guarded. The congestive or malignant scarlet fever is a disease of the utmost danger; some die within the first twenty-four hours, whilst others continue to the third or fourth day, and a few linger on for one or two weeks, but generally the patient is safe if he continues to the eighth or ninth day from the commencement of the eruption. An imperfect efflorescence on the skin, or a retrocession soon after it has appeared, are always unfavorable symptoms, as are also the livid color of the eruption, petechiæ, bleeding from the gums and nostrils, internal hæmorrhage, low irregular pulse, diarrhœa, prostration of strength and delirium. The tongue becoming parched, shining and glossy, livid and glossy cheeks and throat, coma, cold extremities, leaden color of the face and an involuntary discharge of the feces, are fatal symptoms.

[To be continued.]

#### DR. ALCOTT'S WORK ON VEGETABLE DIET.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—I have lately been reading Dr. Alcott's work on Vegetable Diet, and I send you, for publication, such remarks as have been suggested by its perusal. My observations, perhaps, will be somewhat desultory, as I give you my ideas just in the order in which they come into my own mind, without much attention to method.

Dr. Alcott is a worthy and intelligent man, and an industrious compiler and writer. He is one of that numerous class of hard working men, who devote their energies to what they believe to be the best interests of the human race. He is the author of several books, some of them of considerable merit, designed to improve the health and morals of the community. He has done something in the way of diffusing physiological knowledge among the people, and of showing its application in the education of youth. He has also, as he has had opportunity, spoken a good word for the medical profession, and exposed the evils of medical imposture and charlatanism. Though Dr. Alcott has unquestionably done much good, I cannot regard his labors in *dietetics* with much favor. On this subject he is evidently beside himself. As often as he touches it his mind runs riot. He has joined Mr. Graham and a



small band of kindred spirits, and is earnest and eloquent in denouncing the use of flesh, and applauding the virtues of abstinence and starvation. A record of his opinions and the evidence on which they are founded, is to be found in the book before me.

The origin of this book may be learned from the following extract from its pages :

"Twelve years ago, the present season, I was in the first stage of tuberculous consumption, and evidently advancing rapidly to the second. The most judicious physicians were consulted, and their advice at length followed. I commenced the practice of medicine, travelling chiefly on horseback; and though unable [able] to do but little at first, I soon gained strength to perform a moderate business, and to combine with it a little gardening and farming. At the time, or nearly at the time, of commencing the practice of medicine, I laid aside my feather bed, and slept on straw; and in December, of the same year, I abandoned spirits and most kinds of stimulating food. It was not, however, until eight years ago, the present season, that I abandoned all drinks but water, and all flesh, fish and other highly stimulating and concentrated aliments, and confined myself to a diet of milk and vegetables.

"In the mean time, the duties of my profession, and the nature of my studies, led me to prosecute, more diligently than ever, a subject which I had been studying, more or less, from my very childhood—the laws of Human Health. Among other things, I collected facts on this subject from books which came in my way; so that when I came to Boston, in January, 1832, I had already obtained, from various writers, on *materia medica*, physiology, disease and dietetics, quite a large bundle."

In 1834 Dr. Alcott ascertained that Dr. North, "a distinguished practitioner of medicine in Hartford, Conn.," was engaged in a course of inquiry similar to his own. They agreed to unite their stock of materials. In 1836, Dr. North's health failed him, and the materials which he had collected were placed in Dr. Alcott's hands. The book before us contains the "stock" of both these gentlemen. This stock consists of letters from about twenty-four persons (sixteen of them physicians), together with extracts from the writings of distinguished men, ancient and modern.

It is the design of Dr. Alcott and his associates to effect a radical change, a revolution, in the dietetic habits of the community. They say (and they say with great confidence) that man is naturally a vegetable-eating animal—that an exclusive diet of vegetables is not only safe, but the best calculated to develop and sustain all his energies, mental and corporeal—that animal food is unnatural, unnecessary and injurious, and should be banished from use—that one of our great national evils is the habit of eating too much or too nourishing food—that a great proportion of all our infirmities and diseases is the result of eating "flesh meat"—that sickness and suffering would hardly be known, that life would be almost indefinitely protracted, that old age would be characterized by the greenness and vigor of youth, and that death, at last, would be as easy and as quiet as the sleep of an infant, were their

discoveries in the science of dietetics generally known, and their precepts followed.

Now, how the question stands as to man's *natural* food, it is hardly worth while, in this place, to inquire. Until recently, it was supposed to have been settled in favor of a *mixed* diet, but Mr. Graham, it seems, has settled it again, and on a better foundation. He has made the wonderful discovery that man closely resembles the monkey race, and, consequently, is a frugiverous animal. As for myself, I have little confidence in the anatomical argument, as it is called, whichever way it may be supposed to lead. In the sense in which we speak of the food of animals, man may be said—adult man, I mean—to have no *natural* food. Were he, like the brute animals, dependent on nature for the supply and elaboration of his nutriment, he would starve almost before existence had begun. Thank Heaven, he is not yet reduced to the alternative of perishing with hunger, or roaming abroad in search of roots and acorns; or, if he is ever thus reduced, as in the instance of some no very flattering specimens of our race, because, forsooth, it is best that he should live or die *naturally*, the felicities of his condition have not yet been such (seemingly) as to commend it to very special favor. Man is something more than an organized being—a creature of mere instinct. He has in his constitution other and higher principles than those which actuate and govern the brute world. He has a set of faculties comprehended under the name of *reason*, which place him immeasurably above what certain would-be reformers call “a state of nature.” Were it not for reason, his most urgent wants could never be gratified. He could not be clothed, or fed, or housed. He could not survive a day the dangers which beset him from within and from without. Is he exposed to the influence of cold? Nature has not furnished him with the means of protection. She has thrown him upon an inclement world, naked and without shelter. She will not build his fires, or weave him garments, or construct him a habitation. Is he hungry? He calls upon nature, and she presents him with a stone. She furnishes nothing calculated to satisfy the cravings of appetite. But he has another resource of more liberal promise. He appeals to his intelligence, and finds the means of gratifying all he desires. In virtue of that endowment, he assumes the character of a reasoning and inventive animal. Hence come all the arts of agriculture—the art of cultivating and perfecting the products of nature, the arts of cookery, &c. Our food, in the state in which it first comes to our hands, is not suitable for nourishment. Our organs can find no nutriment in it. They reject it. It first has to pass through the improving processes of the agriculturist or the horticulturist. It afterwards demands the mechanical and chemical changes which are the result of cookery. Its fibres are then fitted to be acted upon by the stomach; or, in other words, it is suited for digestion and for nourishing the body.

It is idle to talk of the natural food of man, in the way we do of that of brutes. Man has no natural food; or, rather, anything is natural, the chemical constitution of which is such that it can be fitted, by the aid of art, for the purposes of digestion and nutrition. Our organs have a sort of negative or veto power on whatever is presented for their action—a



power of receiving or rejecting such substances as have been selected for their use ; but they can have no part in any higher office. Whether, of several kinds of food which reason and our organs have approved and received, the one or the other is, on the whole, the best adapted to develop and sustain the energies of body and mind, is a question of experience entirely. It is not to be decided by loose analogies, by the formation of the teeth, or the length and structure of the alimentary canal ; but by careful observation and experiment. If animal food is injurious in its effects—"the root of all evil," in the words of Dr. Alcott—the fact must be proved by watching its effects ; and this not in one instance only, but in numerous cases, and in a variety of circumstances, and on a large scale. The anatomist is not wanted in evidence. He is not a competent witness, and should be ordered off the stand.

If the question, then, whether animal food is destructive to the human system (I speak, of course, of the moderate use of it), is to be decided by experiment, the question at once arises whether such food has ever been used in such a manner as to furnish us with a fair illustration of its effects. One would think that animal food had been eaten long and extensively enough to enable us to know its operation on the health. If it is so destructive, so poisonous, so much "the root of all evil," as some contend, it is surpassingly strange that the discovery of so important a fact has awaited, so patiently and so long, the birth of Mr. Graham—the leader of his sect. How happens it that those large portions of the human race that have always eaten flesh, more or less, have not long ago become entirely degenerate, or even extinct, under the daily influence of so noxious an agent as animal food is maintained to be ? More especially, how happens it that those portions of the human family which eat flesh are, at this moment, farther removed from the point of extinction and degeneracy than any others on the globe ? How happens it that the flesh-eating nations of Europe are so far from having run out, that they furnish better specimens of fully and perfectly developed men than any other of all the descendants of Adam ? Where shall we find a people who, in mental and physical endowments, can be matched with the Europeans ; or where is the "root of all evil" so abundant as in Europe ? Let Dr. Alcott answer these questions. Will he cite the vegetable-eating nations of the East ?—the millions who there observe to the letter (and have done so for ages) his improved system of diet ? Will he expect to win his case by naming the weak and besotted inhabitants of China and Hindostan—those effeminate, degraded and soulless millions who are held in subjection by a handful of British troops ? Could he hold up his head and point out such an instance of manifest contradiction to his principles ? Would he not rather refer to his own case, and Mr. Graham's, and that of a few broken-down, lean-visaged dyspeptics, who have never been thought the very best specimens of nature's finer workmanship ? But shall Dr. Alcott be allowed to escape in this manner ? Shall he be allowed to pass over, without notice, the only experiments which have ever been made on an adequate scale, and during a sufficiently long time to test fairly and decisively the truth of his principles ?

(To be continued.)

MEDICAL BOTANY.

BY SAMUEL ALLEN TOOTHAKER, M.D.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

NO. X.—RHUS. SUMACH. MERCURY. IVY.

**Sex. Syst.**—Class pentandria; order trigynia. **Nat. Order.**—Terebin-  
taceæ. **Gen. Char.**—*Calyx* 5-parted. *Petals* 5. *Flowers* inferior.  
*Berry* small, sub-globose, with one bony seed.

**Specif. Descrip.**—*Rhus toxicodendron*. **Var. radicans.** Stem climb-  
ing; leaves ternate; leaflets broad-oval, entire or sinuate-dentate, sub-  
pubescent beneath; flowers dioecious, in sessile, axillary racemes. It  
grows in woods and about fences, and often climbs to a great height.  
The *Rhus radicans*, or poison ivy, is a general inhabitant, I believe, of  
every part of New England, and is known by every country boy who is  
obnoxious to its poisonous effluvia.

Having recently tested the virose qualities of this plant, in my own  
person, I feel myself obligated to give it a brief notice. Dr. Wood  
says (*vide U. S. Disp.*), "The juice applied to the skin frequently  
produces inflammation and vesication; and the same poisonous property  
is possessed by a volatile principle, which escapes from the plant itself,  
and produces in persons who come into its vicinity an exceedingly trou-  
blesome erysipelatous affection." "The effects," the doctor continues,  
"are experienced soon after exposure, and usually begin to decline in  
about a week. A light, cooling regimen, with saline purgatives, and  
the local use of cold lead water, are the best remedies." Yet with  
these "best remedies," the symptoms only begin to decline in about a  
week. I have several times been poisoned with this plant, and once or  
twice with another species, I think the *Rhus vernix*, when a boy, but  
never since I commenced the study of medicine till the time to which  
allusion is made above. I had made use of various remedies to quell  
the distressing pain and itching sensation, but never found one that would  
very much shorten its course. A strong solution of common salt (mu-  
riate of soda) in water is a cooling and comforting application, while  
the inflammation is high; also a solution of sulphate of magnesia, in-  
ternally and externally, is of some service. Olive oil is of considerable  
repute as a remedy, but will not effect a speedy cure. Neither will  
any of the vegetable specifics I have ever tried. An onion poultice has  
been more efficacious than the whole catalogue of other remedies to  
which I had before resorted. A painful necessity, however, at last in-  
duced me to search for something which would eradicate the poison of  
*rhus* from the system.

May 11th. After dinner I walked into a garden where a wall had  
just been removed, as my friend informed me, for the purpose of killing  
out the ivy, which was uprooted, and lay strewed over the ground. As  
there were no leaves on it at this season of the year, and I had not for  
some years been poisoned, I did not much fear it, but was careful not to  
touch any of the roots or stems. **Evening.** Felt some sensation of  
heat about the face, but ascribed it to riding in the wind.

12th. Considerable heat and some itching, with slight fulness.

13th. *Morning.* Considerable tumefaction, with much of that indescribable itching, stinging or burning sensation, peculiar to this affection. Thus distressed, I determined on experiment. I accordingly applied to one part tincture of sanguinaria (bloodroot); to another, ung. nit. hydrarg.; and to a third, dilute nitric acid. The sanguinaria afforded some relief, but seemed to me not to act with much power. The ointment also relieved moderately the itching, but this was all. The acid was a very painful application, but after the smarting it caused had subsided, and the part had been washed in cool water, it remained comfortable longer than when under other treatment.

14th. Slept sound, and neglected any application during the night. Tumefaction great, vesicular eruption very distinct. Now determined on giving the sulphate of morphia a trial, as I had seen it mentioned in the Journal by Dr. A., of Meriden, Conn., as effecting a speedy cure in his own case. Accordingly made free use of the following solution. R. Sulph. morphiae, grs. x.; aqua fonta, f3ss; when, to my great surprise and satisfaction, the poison was entirely subdued in five or six hours, and with the use of but a half ounce of the solution applied to the part with a piece of soft rag. Some pain was experienced after each application, but it was not very severe, and I was greatly relieved within an hour after I began to use it. Soon after I commenced the use of morphia, a previous slight headache became intense, with severe pain in the back and limbs, and I was unable to sit up or to walk across the floor. Night, however, had come, and I slept so soundly as to be waked with great difficulty to take drink once or twice before morning.

15th. *Morning.* Entirely free from pain—very slight itching. Used a few drops of the solution two or three times, and took a portion of salts. The desquamating process has already rapidly commenced. Health was speedily restored, with no relapse of the disease, and I am entirely confident in the efficacy of the morphia as a remedy for the poison of rhus. Were the severe constitutional symptoms occasioned by suddenly driving the poison from the surface? or were they the specific effects of the morphia taken into the system by absorption? I am myself of opinion they were the latter, as the quantity applied, to a partially denuded surface, was sufficient to affect constitutionally at least ten adults, if applied to an ulcerated surface.

The question now occurs, is there any preventive of this poison? Some country people use *coptis trifolia* (gold thread), steeped in rum, as a specific against it. But I am not certain of its efficacy. Others chew the leaves of the poison ivy to protect them from its own poison; but I can hardly believe it can be done with safety, especially by one subject to its poisonous influence. Yet I have heard some persons say they had eaten the leaves, and were never afterwards poisoned, though they had formerly been affected by it.

*South Reading, October, 1838.*

*Note.*—I am under the necessity of deferring the consideration of the plant so often referred to as the cow-parsnip of physicians in the western part of this State, in consequence of the difficulty of ascertaining with certainty whether the plant in question is *sison aureus* or *thapsia*

trifoliata. I have been favored with a quantity of the plant sent me by Dr. C. C. Field, of Leominster, for examination, which he obtained at Northfield. It was packed while fresh, in moss, and kept moist, but rotted considerably before it reached me. I also saw a specimen at your office, sent by a physician in New Hampshire, but it was so dried up as to be unfit for examination. Dr. Bates, in an article in the Journal, calls it *sison aureus*. The only doubt in my mind has been, and still is, whether it is *sison aureus* of Torrey, *Smyrniun aureum* of Linneus, *zizia aurea* of Eaton; or the *thapsia trifoliata* of Torrey, *thaspium barbinode* of Nuttall, and *thaspium aureum* of Eaton. The two plants have, according to Nuttall, often been confounded by the most eminent botanists, and the last named plant has been mistaken for *Smyrniun*. Prof. Nuttall, in his *Genera of North American Plants*, notes the peculiarities of each; also a faithful description of both may be found in *Darlington's Botany of Chester County, Penn.*, a valuable work recently published.

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## BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

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BOSTON, OCTOBER 24, 1838.

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### AMERICAN MEDICAL ALMANAC.

In the course of another week, Messrs. Marsh, Capen & Lyon, of Boston, will publish a little work with the above title, which comprises a variety of medical matter in the most concentrated form in which it is possible to print a book. It contains an accurate account of all the medical schools in the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland and France, with the names of the professors in each department; the names of all medical Journals in this country and Europe; the anniversaries of literary and scientific societies, principal officers, &c. There is an alphabetical table of all medicines now in use, with their compounds, and the doses of each preparation accurately expressed, together with rising of a hundred forms of prescriptions for particular diseases, from the highest modern authorities. In connection with these several subjects, in the calendar pages, in which the phases of the moon are calculated, is inserted the time of the decease of eminent physicians. Lastly, so compactly is the whole arranged, the type being diamond, that the book is a neat pocket-book, closed with a pencil, and is also furnished with blank leaves for inserting daily accounts and memoranda. To practising physicians, surgeons, medical students and dispensing apothecaries, throughout the entire country, it is believed this will be considered exceedingly useful. Booksellers in all the principal cities and towns, south and west, will have it on sale by the first of December.

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*Crania Americana.*—Mention has formerly been made of the great work by Dr. Samuel G. Morton, of Philadelphia, which has been several years in progress, entitled "*Crania Americana, or a comparative view of*

the skulls of various aboriginal nations of North and South America, to which is to be prefixed an essay on the varieties of the human species, and on the American race in particular, illustrated by sixty plates and a colored map." A specimen of the lithographic drawings has been politely forwarded to our address, within a few days, which far surpasses our expectations of the manner in which we had supposed they were to be executed. A Peruvian skull, from the Temple of the Sun, and the embalmed head from a Peruvian cemetery at Arica, seem to be as perfectly displayed as it is possible to represent such objects on paper. In the course of the present month, according to the prospectus, the whole is to be ready for the public. The text is to embrace between two and three hundred pages, in imperial quarto, on fine paper. All literary and scientific institutions in this country, to say nothing of private libraries, should possess this admirable national production. Both the antiquarian and philosopher, and even the historian and phrenologist, must necessarily have an interest in the labors of Dr. Morton. To our professional brethren, the *Crania Americana* will be a desirable acquisition. Whenever we are favored with a sight of the complete work, a further notice will be given of its literary and scientific claims.

**Smallpox.**—By the activity of the public authorities throughout the Union, the last year, the smallpox, which actually raged with alarming violence, was finally circumscribed by vaccination, and the subjects for its action greatly lessened; but the poor Indians seemed to be doomed to extermination by this terrible disease. Thousands upon thousands were swept away by it in 1837. After the lapse of a few months, as if to gather energy, it has again exhibited a fearful activity among the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes—and unless the government pursue the humane policy which reflected great credit on the nation last year, and send physicians to the remote tribes, to vaccinate the unprotected, there is no calculating the devastation of life that will ensue.

**Diseases of Emigrant Animals.**—It is stated in the *African Repository*, that animals which are carried to Africa, from America, are subject to disease, but the peculiarities of the malady, unfortunately for the naturalist, are not stated. The same publication mentions, under date of August 4th, that it was unusually healthy at Bassa Cove, about which much anxiety seems to have been manifested, on account of the colored emigrants from the United States.

**Yellow Fever at Charleston.**—Contrary to the expectations of the profession in that city, the fever has never manifested more violence, or been less under the control of medicine, than at present. Much reliance is placed on the appearance of a frost, to check its devastation, but it seems, thus far, to defy all ordinary sanitary precautions, as well as remedial agents which were once considered serviceable.

**Mr. Combe's Lectures.**—After having closely followed this gentleman in his lucid demonstrations, we confess ourselves not only very much gratified, but profitably instructed. His manner is not boisterous or im-

perative, but strictly plain, and those who listen to him are constrained to acknowledge that he is a philosopher of no ordinary powers. Physicians will reap as much benefit from these lectures, if not more, than any other class of hearers, because he clears up points that have always been obscure in diseases of the brain. On insanity, particularly, the facts advanced in proof of the positions laid down, are too important to be disregarded by those who profess to relieve the worst of maladies to which humanity is predisposed. Without going into details, it is sufficient to say, unhesitatingly, that the study of legal medicine and mental philosophy, without a knowledge of the principles of phrenology, illustrated by one as thoroughly conversant with both, as Mr. Combe, cannot be studied to advantage, or understood in all their length, breadth and bearings.

*Suppression of Quackery.*—It has been suggested that quackery ought to be assimilated, by the Legislature, to the crime of "obtaining money under false pretences." The "Cour Royale" of Orleans, in France, has recently been governed by this view in a case submitted to it. It seems that three doctors and an apothecary, with the sounding title of members of the "Hippocratic Society," set out from Paris on a tour through the provinces, for the purpose of giving gratuitous advice and selling their remedies to all comers. Their approach to each large town and village was pompously announced by enormous placards, and all the other means so well understood by quacks in this country. Their plan succeeded admirably until they arrived at Orleans, where they and their drugs were seized. It appeared, on investigation, that they were *bonâ fide* doctors, and could not, therefore, be prosecuted for the illegal practice of medicine; but as the indictment against them also contained a charge of "swindling, or obtaining money by false pretences," and as their drugs, which were warranted to cure all diseases, and were sold at exorbitant prices, were found to be merely a mixture of sugar and jalap, the court found them guilty of this charge, and condemned S. to two years' imprisonment and a fine of 2000 francs; G. to fifteen months' imprisonment and a fine of 1000 francs; and M. to one year's imprisonment and a fine of 500 francs.

*India Medical Journal.*—By a late arrival, we have received the regular files of this valuable periodical, conducted by Dr. Frederick Corbyn, of Fort William, a gentleman of distinguished rank in the East India Service. It may be gratifying to numerous correspondents of this Journal to remark that their articles have been liberally copied by Dr. Corbyn, which is very satisfactory evidence of the value placed upon them abroad. Among them we may mention part of Dr. David King's essay on cholera infantum—Dr. Benjamin Haskell's article on animal magnetism—Dr. Henry Frost's on abdominal tumors, creosote, &c.—Dr. N. J. Knight's on creosote in uterine hemorrhage—Dr. E. J. Davenport's on polypi in the meatus auditorius externus—and Dr. Warren's letter from Europe.

*Bad Effect of Poultices in Inflammation of the Eye.*—Warm poultices and long-continued fomentations are most especially conducive to the destructive consequences of ophthalmic inflammation, the relief they



may afford being treacherous in the highest possible degree; and so obvious is their tendency to effect relief, by accelerating the destruction of the cornea, that any patient may be considered as entitled to receive damages, in whom the disease has terminated unfavorably, whenever it has done so under the application of poultices.

**Treatment of Intussusception by Inflation.**—Although this is not a new practice, it deserves notice; the more so, that it has been known to have succeeded in other instances. A case recently reported in the *Lancet*, presented all the usual symptoms: intolerable restlessness; the most obstinate sickness, the singularly distressed state of countenance and shrunken features. The usual remedies were had recourse to—viz., warm baths, clysters, anodyne frictions over the abdomen, &c.—but without avail. As a forlorn hope, a trial was made of inflation by means of a clyster-pipe attached to a common pair of bellows, with the most happy result: the sickness immediately ceased, the child within an hour passed a natural stool, fell into a sleep, and in the morning was almost without ailment.

**Muriate of Gold in Syphilitic Affections of Children.**—Dr. Möller has employed the above remedy in three cases of syphilitic affections of new-born children. In two of these cases mercurial preparations had been employed without benefit; they were much improved but not totally cured under the use of the mur. auri. In the third case the child was born apparently well, but after three weeks symptoms of syphilis manifested themselves. Here, also, mercurial preparations produced no benefit. A powder, containing 1-28th of a grain of muriate of gold in 15 grains of sugar, was now given twice a day, and in ten days all symptoms had declined. The cure was completed by the time that a single grain had been exhibited.—*Siebold's Journal*.

**DIED.**—At New Haven, Conn., Dr. Elijah Munson, in the 74th year of his age.—At Charleston, S. C., Dr. Henry Alexander, Professor in Columbia Medical College.—In Peoria, Illinois, Dr. Peter Bartlett, late of Salisbury, N. H.—At Burlington, R. I., Dr. Warren M. Smith, 54.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending Oct. 30, 33. Males, 16—females, 17.

Of consumption, 3—accidental, 1—infantile, 3—quincy, 1—dropsy in the head, 1—cholera infantum, 2—croup, 3—stx, 1—inflammation of the stomach, 1—dysentery, 2—scarlet fever, 3—cuticle, 1—diarrhea, 1—edema, 1—drowned, 1—marasmus, 1—dropsy on the heart, 1—inflammation of the lungs, 1—delirium tremens, 1—teething, 1—stillborn, 2.

#### TO PHYSICIANS.

A PHYSICIAN residing about 15 miles from Boston, desirous of relinquishing practice, wishes to dispose of his estate. The land, about 14 acres, is well cultivated and stocked with trees, the buildings good, and the practice, having been in possession of the present occupant more than 30 years, a valuable one. With good security, the time of payment may suit the purchaser. Inquire at this office; if by mail, post-paid.

Oct. 17—34

#### AN EXCELLENT CHANCE FOR A PHYSICIAN.

THE subscriber, the only physician in the town, offers his stand for sale, situated in Lempeter, N. H. in a pleasant village, consisting of an excellent two story house, well finished and nearly new, with a back kitchen, wood house and barn, so constructed as to make it a very desirable situation for a physician—a good well of water under cover by the kitchen door. About one acre of land, under high cultivation. The town contains over 1000 inhabitants. Nearest physician from five to seven and a half miles. Price less than \$1000.

Oct. 17—31

TRUMAN ABELL.

#### NEW LEECH ESTABLISHMENT.

THE medical profession are hereby informed that the subscriber has made such arrangements that he will be able to supply them with the best Foreign Leeches, at the lowest market price. They will be safely put up in boxes, with the clay in which they were imported. Physicians may be certain that careful attention will be given to their orders.

Oct. 17—lysep

SETH W. FOWLE,  
33 Prince St. corner of Salem St. Boston.

## SCHOOL FOR MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

Two Subscribers propose establishing a private Medical School, to go into operation the first of September next. The advantages of the Massachusetts General Hospital and other public institutions will be secured to the pupils; and every attainable facility will be afforded for anatomical pursuits. Regular oral instructions and examinations in all the branches of the profession, will form a part of the plan intended to be pursued.

On the Fracture of Medicine and Materia Medica, by Dr. BISHOP.  
On Anatomy and Surgery, by Dr. RYLAND.  
On Midwifery and Chemistry, by Dr. STORER.  
On Physiology and Pathology, by Dr. HOLMES.

Dissections will be carried on throughout the year, and a course of Lectures on Practical Anatomy and Surgery will be given in the interval between the Medical Lectures of Harvard University. A room will be provided in a central part of the city, with all the conveniences required by students.

Boston, August 17, 1838.

Aug 22—ep3m

JACOB BIGELOW  
EDWARD REYNOLDS  
D. HUMPHREYS STOKER,  
OLIVER W. HOLMES.

## FALLING OF THE WOMB CURED BY EXTERNAL APPLICATION.

DR. A. G. HULL'S UTERO-ABDOMINAL SUPPORTER is offered to those afflicted with *Prolapsus Uteri*, or *Falling of the Womb*, and other diseases depending upon a relaxation of the abdominal muscles, as an instrument in every way calculated for relief and permanent restoration to health. When this instrument is carefully and properly fitted to the form of the patient, it invariably affords the most immediate immunity from the distressing "dragging and bearing-down" sensations which accompany nearly all cases of visceral displacements of the abdomen, and its efficient application is always followed by an early confession of radical relief from the patient herself. The Supporter is of simple construction, and can be applied by the patient without further aid. Within the last three years nearly 1500 of the *Utero-Abdominal Supporters* have been applied, with the most happy results.

The very great success which this instrument has met, warrants the assertion, that its examination by the physician will induce him to discard the disgusting pessary hitherto in use. It is gratifying to state that it has met the decided approbation of Sir Astley Cooper, of London, Edward Delafield, M.D., Professor of Midwifery, University of the State of New York, of Professors of Midwifery in the different Medical Schools of the United States, and every other Physician or Surgeon who has had a practical knowledge of its qualities, as well as every patient who has worn it.

The public and medical profession are cautioned against impositions in this instrument, as well as in Trusses vendible as mine, which are unsafe and vicious imitations. The genuine Trusses bear my signature in writing on the label, and the Supporter has its title embossed upon its envelope.

AMOS G. HULL, Office 4 Vesey Street, Astor House, New York.  
The Subscribers having been appointed Agents for the sale of the above instruments, attended  
added to them will be promptly attended to.  
Jas. 3. lyceop

LOWE & REED,  
34 Merchants Row, Boston.

## MEDICAL INSTRUCTION.

Two subscribers are associated for the purpose of giving a complete course of medical instruction, and will receive pupils on the following terms:

The pupils will be admitted to the practice of the Massachusetts General Hospital, and will receive clinical lectures on the cases they witness there. Instruction, by lectures or examinations, will be given in the intervals of the public lectures, every week day.

On Midwifery, and the Diseases of Women and Children, and on Chemistry, by Dr. CHANNING.  
On Physiology, Pathology, Therapeutics, and Materia Medica, " Dr. WARE.  
On the Principles and Practice of Surgery, " Dr. OTIS.  
On Anatomy, " Dr. LEWIS.

The students are provided with a room in Dr. Lewis's house, where they have access to a large library. Lights and fuel without any charge. The opportunities for acquiring a knowledge of Anatomy are not inferior to any in the country.

The fees are \$100—to be paid in advance. No credit given, except on sufficient security of some person in Boston, nor for a longer period than six months.

Applications are to be made to Dr. Walter Channing, Tremont Street, opposite the Tremont House, Boston.

Oct. 18—if

WALTER CHANNING,  
JOHN WARE,  
GEORGE W. OTIS, JR.  
WINSLOW LEWIS, JR.

## HARVARD UNIVERSITY—MEDICAL LECTURES.

Two Lectures will begin at the College in Mason street, first Wednesday in November, at 9 o'clock, A. M., and continue three months. For a month after, additional lectures will be given. Dissections in the Medical College, and attendance at the Hospital, will also be continued.

Anatomy and Operative Surgery, by Dr. J. C. WARREN.  
Midwifery and Medical Jurisprudence, by Dr. CHANNING.  
Materia Medica and Clinical Medicine, by Dr. BISHOP.  
Principles of Surgery and Clinical Surgery, by Dr. C. HAYWARD.  
Chemistry, by Dr. WEBSTER.  
Theory and Practice of Physic, by Dr. WARE.  
Circulars of the Medical and Surgical Practices of the Hospital may be had of the Dean.

Boston, July 23, 1838.

Aug 1—4N

WALTER CHANNING,  
Dean of the Faculty of Medicine.

THE BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL is published every Wednesday, by D. CLAPP, JR. at 184 Washington Street, corner of Franklin Street, to whom all communications must be addressed, *post-paid*. It is also published in Monthly Parts, each Part containing the weekly numbers of the preceding month, stitched in a cover. J. V. C. SMITH, M.D. Editor.—Price \$2.50 a year in advance, \$3.50 after three months, and \$4.00 if not paid within the year.—Agents allowed every seventh copy gratis.—Orders from a distance must be accompanied by payment in advance, or satisfactory reference.—Postage the same as for a Newspaper.